AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (previously presented): A network management system for creating and implementing a service on a network, said network management system comprising:

means for acquiring policy rules comprising service rules which create the service and implementation rules which implement the service;

means for inferring said policy rules to determine commands corresponding to said policy rules; and

means for transmitting the determined commands to network elements of the network,

wherein said implementation rules for implementing the service comprise technology rules and equipment rules,

wherein the inferring means correlates the service rules with the technology rules,

wherein the technology rules determine technology to use in the implementation of the service based on attributes of the service and equipment in the network, and

wherein the service is defined by the service rules independently of the technology and specification of the network equipment,

wherein the inferring means adapts the technology rules using the equipment rules based on an equipment type.

2. (previously presented): The network management system claimed in claim 1, wherein said inference means comprises an inference engine provided in the network management system and external to the network comprising the network elements.

3-4. (canceled).

5. (previously presented): The network management system claimed in claim 1, wherein the service rules are provided externally from the network management system and wherein the service rules specify conditions and timing for creating the service.

6. (previously presented): The network management system claimed in claim 1, wherein the technology rules specify which protocol to use for the service based on the attributes of the equipment in the network and wherein the equipment rules model how to select the technology rules based on the attributes of the equipment.

7. (previously presented): The network management system claimed in claim 1, wherein the service is designed by a developer independently from specifications of equipment and technology specified in the implementation rules and wherein the implementation rules are dynamically implemented after the determining means determines applicable implementation rules.

8. (previously presented): The network management system claimed in claim 1, wherein the service is designed by an operator without requiring specific knowledge of equipment and technology of the network for the service.

9. (previously presented): The network management system claimed in claim 1, wherein the implementation rules specify implementation specific details of the service.

10. (previously presented): The network management system claimed in claim 1, wherein the implementation rules specify attributes of the service.

11. (previously presented): The network management system claimed in claim 1, wherein the service is a virtual private network.

12. (previously presented): The network management system claimed in claim 1, wherein the technology to be used is determined based on a number of sites involved in a particular network.

13. (previously presented): The network management systems claim in claim 1, wherein the equipment rules model how the technology rules must be selected for the particular equipment type.

14. (previously presented): The network management system claimed in claim 1, wherein the particular equipment type is selected based on their capacity.

15. (previously presented): The network management system claimed in claim 1, wherein the service provides video conferences.

16. (previously presented):   The network management system claimed in claim 1, wherein the technology is Internet Protocol Security (IPsec) protocol.

17. (previously presented): The network management system claimed in claim 1, wherein the technology is multi-protocol label switching (MPLS) tunnels.

18. (previously presented): The network management system claimed in claim 1, wherein the equipment is a router.

19. (previously presented): The network management system claimed in claim 1, wherein the network comprises IP routers.

20. (previously presented): The network management system claimed in claim 1, wherein the network comprises asynchronous transfer mode (ATM) switches.

21. (previously presented): The network management system claimed in claim 1, wherein the equipment is an asynchronous transfer mode (ATM) switch.

22. (previously presented): The network management system claimed in claim 1, wherein the particular equipment type is selected based on a manufacturer.

23. (new): The network management system claimed of claim 1, wherein the technology rules are different from the equipment rules.

24. (new): The network management system of claim 1, further comprising a first database which stores the technology rules and a second database which stores the equipment rules.